ANALYZING YOUR SCHOOL'S CAPACITY TO IMPROVE

This self-assessment will help your professional learning community identify your school's current status on important indicators associated with developing a school's capacity to improve as well as on new roles for learning community members in CFIP data dialogues. As a self-assessment, it is only valuable if you respond accurately and thoughtfully.

Rate the extent to which your school has implemented successfully the following components of capacity building:

No Evidence that This Is in Place	Limited Evidence that This Is in Place	Extensive Evidence that This Is in Place
1	2	3

Component 1 of Capacity: Staff Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Knowledge

a. Ensure that teachers have a deep and rich
content knowledge in the subjects they are teaching.   1   2   3

b. Ensure that teachers understand how to translate their
content knowledge into engaging student learning
activities and informative assessments   1   2   3

Skills

c. Ensure that teachers have the skills to manage
their classrooms and student behavior appropriately.   1   2   3

Dispositions

d. Develop a culture of high expectations in the school
and identify *specific ways* that all staff members can
convey their high expectations to students.   1   2   3

e. Develop a greater sense of efficacy among the staff by
identifying and publicizing the ways in which staff are
having a significant impact on increasing student learning,
despite the obstacles many students may face outside school.   1   2   3

f. Ensure that every student has a strong support system,
    including a special relationship with a caring adult
    mentor on academic issues.   1   2   3

g. Affirm their common values in support of a collective
    focus on student learning as the major purpose of school.   1   2   3

What evidence could you cite about your school's status on these indicators?

What other data will you need to collect to have a fuller understanding of your school's current status and needs in Capacity Component 1?

Component 2 of Capacity: Collaboration and Inquiry Based on Data in a Professional Learning Community

Collaboration

a. Ensure effective engagement of stakeholders in setting
    goals and developing implementation strategies.   1   2   3

b. Establish multiple opportunities for collaboration,
    in which team members are expected to share the work,
    the thinking, and the responsibility for team decisions.   1   2   3

c. Institutionalize the belief that disagreements are normal
    and that there is a process in place to value and work
    through differences.   1   2   3

Inquiry

d. Engage in a constant search for "best practices" (teaching
    strategies shown by confirmed research to be most effective).   1   2   3

e. Incorporate into all professional development activities the
    time and opportunities for the practice of new strategies in

safe settings, reflection with peers, and ongoing feedback on
the quality of implementation.   1   2   3

   f.   Expect staff to embed the strategies taught in professional
development sessions and practiced in classrooms into their
daily work of teaching.   1   2   3

   g.   Implement coaching and mentoring programs to provide
ongoing feedback and support to teachers as they implement
new instructional strategies.   1   2   3

Data Dialogues

   h.   Provide communication structures such as the CFIP protocol, the
time, and the support for focused data dialogues to occur in
school teams during the school day, at least once every two weeks.   1   2   3

   i.   Promote reflective dialogue in school teams that is increasing
concrete and precise about student achievement and increasingly
self-reflective about the instructional practices contributing
to student learning.   1   2   3

   j.   Demonstrate (by words and actions) the trust in faculty members
to act quickly and decisively to increase student learning in
response to new data and within clearly identified boundaries.   1   2   3

   k.   Follow up to ensure that the enrichments, interventions, and
instructional improvements that are identified as a result of
the CFIP dialogues occur at a high level of quality
in all classrooms.   1   2   3

What evidence could you cite indicating your school's status on these indicators?

What other data will you need to collect to have a fuller understanding of your school's current status and needs in Capacity Component 2?

Component 3 of Capacity: Program Coherence

a. Have a clear and stable set of school goals focused
   on student learning.   1   2   3

b. Communicate the school vision and goals to stakeholders
   using every possible means.   1   2   3

c. Link all school initiatives together into a comprehensive and
   coordinated instructional improvement model or framework.   1   2   3

d. Develop several common instructional strategies that all
   teachers in each course or grade use, based on best practices
   as validated by confirmed research.   1   2   3

e. Develop several common assessments that, several times a year,
   all teachers in each course or grade administer, analyze, and
   act on the results of.   1   2   3

f. Accept into the school only those programs and initiatives that
   support schoolwide focus areas and program continuity.   1   2   3

g. Keep the curriculum reasonably stable over time, thus
   providing sustained opportunities to teach it well.   1   2   3

h. Keep assessments reasonably stable over time so that teachers have
   sufficient opportunities to prepare students adequately for them.   1   2   3

i. Keep teaching assignments stable enough over time so that
   teachers have opportunities to learn the curriculum content and
   how to teach a particular age group and course most effectively.   1   2   3

j. Keep program leaders and positions reasonably stable
   over time so that initiatives can be developed and supported. 1   2   3

What evidence could you cite indicating your school's status on these indicators?

What other data will you need to collect to have a fuller understanding of your school's current status and needs in Capacity Component 3?

Component 4 of Capacity: Resources

a. Provide sufficient and high quality technical resources to support effective teaching.

    1. Classroom work space and supplies   1   2   3

    2. Curriculum aligned with Standards for College and Career Readiness and prioritized so that students have sufficient time to become proficient in the essential skills and knowledge within the school year   1   2   3

    3. Textbooks, library books, computers, labs, and other supportive material   1   2   3

b. Provide sufficient and high quality human resources to support effective teaching.

    1. Knowledgeable and supportive central office staff   1   2   3

    2. In-school content and pedagogical experts   1   2   3

    3. Support services for students, such as guidance counselors, school nurses, and psychologists   1   2   3

  c. Use all available resources effectively and efficiently.

    1. Allocate the lion's share of school-based funds to the identified priority areas in the school progress plan.   1   2   3

    2. Keep instructional time sacred and never infringed upon.   1   2   3

    3. Develop students' and teachers' schedules around the academic learning needs of students, not the convenience of adults.   1   2   3

    4. Provide several opportunities each week for collaborative

learning and planning by teachers of each course or grade.   1   2   3

5. Ensure that the most effective teachers (as shown by
   student performance data) work with the most
   challenging students.   1   2   3

6. Organize the school around a few action teams aligned
   with learning goals, instead of many committees going
   in divergent directions.   1   2   3

What evidence could you cite indicating your school's status on these indicators?

What other data will you need to collect to have a fuller understanding of your school's current status and needs in Capacity Component 4?

Component 5 of Capacity: Distributed Leadership

a   Promote an environment that is open to risk taking,
     collaboration, and participative decision-making.   1   2   3

b   Establish a climate among the faculty promoting
     continuous improvement and striving for a better school.   1   2   3

c.   Develop a consensus among all stakeholders in the community
     that supports the actions of the school.   1   2   3

d.   Communicate constantly and in an open and objective
     fashion with internal and external stakeholder groups about
     the school's mission and vision, as well as its current situation.   1   2   3

e.   Ensure that all voices in the school community are heard
     and respected.   1   2   3

f.   Model continuous learning by active participation in all

schoolwide professional development sessions.   1   2   3

g.   Recognize and reward progress and embed celebrations
into the school culture.   1   2   3

What evidence could you cite indicating your school's status on these indicators?

What other data will you need to collect to have a fuller understanding of your school's current status and needs in Capacity Component 5?

Adapted from the work of:

Kruse, Sharon, Karen Seashore Louis, and Anthony Byrk. "Building Professional Community in Schools." Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, 1994.

Newmann, Fred M., M. Bruce King, and Peter Youngs. "Professional Development that Addresses School Capacity: Lessons from Urban Schools." *American Journal of Education* (August 2000): 259-300.

REFLECT ON YOUR FINDINGS

After reflection, complete the following:

1. What are some of the indicators in which the most progress has been made at your school ("3"s)?

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2. What are some indicators that require further work ("1"s)?

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In what capacity component are most of these weaker indicators? _____

TAKE ACTION ON YOUR FINDINGS

Capacity component of greatest concern: _____

Discuss with your colleagues who share a similar concern:

INDICATORS OF CAPACITY REQUIRING THE MOST FURTHER WORK	FIRST STEPS TO TAKE AT YOUR SCHOOL TO BUILD CAPACITY IN THESE AREAS
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.

INDICATORS OF CAPACITY REQUIRING THE MOST FURTHER WORK	FIRST STEPS TO TAKE AT YOUR SCHOOL TO BUILD CAPACITY IN THESE AREAS
	1. 2. 3.
	1. 2. 3.